DAWN

METRO South

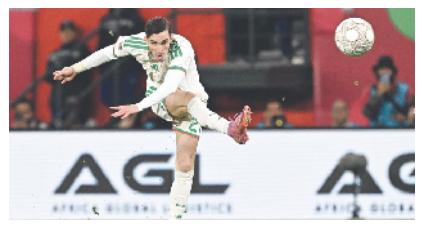
KARACHI Thursday, January 8, 2026

KARACHI

Sunset	05:59pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow)	07:17am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum	10°C
Maximum	24°C
Humidity	35%
Outlook	Sunny



Boulbina stunner takes Algeria through, Diallo sparkles for Ivory Coast

Pg.17 SPORT

A DISTRICT administration official pastes a sealing notice on a shop in Nazimabad for violating the encroachment laws; while (right) a man uses a sledgehammer to demolish an unauthorised structure extending onto the road in front of a shop in the same locality, during the aggressively enforced anti-encroachment drive. —INP / PPI

'World-class' uplift plan envisioned for Karachi in partnership with FWO

• CM Murad approves transformation plan for metropolis • Announces Rs84.796bn for 523 city schemes
• Rs10.72bn allocated for six mega projects to address traffic problems

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday approved the Karachi Transformation Plan aimed at forging a partnership with the Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) to achieve "world-class development" in the city.

Presiding over a joint meeting of the FWO, the provincial local government department and the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC), the chief minister discussed large-scale development initiatives for Karachi, including mega infrastructure and connectivity projects.

According to a press statement, the meeting, held at CM House, was attended by FWO Director General Major General Abdul Sami, LG Minister Nasir Hussain Shah, Chief Secretary of Sindh Asif Hyder Shah, Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Principal Secretary to the CM Agha Wasif, Commissioner of Karachi Hassan Naqvi, and Secretary of Finance Fayaz Jatoi.

The CM informed the meeting participants that six priority infrastructure projects worth Rs10.72 billion had been identified for immediate execution under the Karachi division to address chronic traffic congestion, improve connectivity, and strengthen urban mobility.

These priority schemes include the rehabilitation of the road from M-9 Motorway to Malir-15 via Jinnah Avenue and Sharea Faisal for Rs1.025 billion, as well as the construction of a right-turn underpass at Malir Halt from Printing Press to Sharea Faisal for Rs1.5 billion, and the construction of a flyover from Airport Road to Star Gate, Sharea Faisal, costing Rs1.2bn to improve access to airport.

Other projects include the rehabilitation of the road from Y-Junction to Machli Chowk in Hawkesbay, including a damaged section from Masroor Base to Truck Stand for Rs1.995bn, and the construction of a flyover at Sohrab Goth for Rs5bn, which serves as Karachi's main gateway for intercity traffic.

Rs84.7bn one-time grant-in-aid for Karachi uplift proposed

At the outset, the chief minister stated that the Sindh government intends to implement a comprehensive development plan for Karachi and announced a one-time grant-in-aid of Rs84.796 billion for 523 schemes in the city.

He added that approval had been granted for Rs26.282 billion under the Federal Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for schemes related to Karachi.

"I want to initiate development projects in partnership with FWO to ensure quality, speed and transparency," Murad Shah said, emphasising that all mega and significant projects must have world-class planning and design. "Karachi's development should be at par with the world's best cities," he added.

Briefing the meeting, Minister for Local Government Syed Nasir Shah and Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab stated that Karachi, as Pakistan's economic hub, faces serious structural, environmental and civic challenges.

To tackle these issues, 10-12 high-visibility development schemes are being identified, with five already approved by the chief minister for early implementation.

Furthermore, a comprehensive portfolio of 523 development schemes costing Rs84.796 billion has been proposed for Karachi.

These include the rehabilitation and reconstruction of internal damaged roads across various neighbourhoods, improvements to traffic management systems, rehabilitation of connecting roads, major arteries, flyovers, parks, and the beautification of seven designated roads. The main executing agencies include KMC, KDA, Karachi Mega Schemes, and the City Government offices.

Mayor Murtaza Wahab stated that these schemes had been identified through field verification, departmental assessments, and stakeholder consultations, with the aims of easing traffic congestion, enhancing airport and intercity connectivity, strengthening logistics and industrial transport routes, and improving civic infrastructure and urban aesthetics.

The chief minister decided that the FWO engineer, along with officers from the Local Government and KMC,

Continued on Page 14

Journalist held under Peca sent to prison after NCCIA remand denied

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A judicial magistrate sent journalist Muhammad Aslam Shah to prison on judicial remand a day after the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) arrested him in a case registered under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (Peca) 2025.

The case was registered on Dec 29, 2025 on the complaint of Tabish Raza Husnain, said to be an official of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC), under Sections 20 (offences against the dignity of a natural person) and Section 24 (cyberstalking) of Peca.

On Wednesday, the NCCIA brought the journalist before the judicial magistrate (South) and sought his custody for interrogation for 14 days.

However, the investigating officer failed to satisfy the court and as a result, the magistrate sent Mr Shah to prison on judicial remand.

In the FIR, the complainant alleged that Mr Shah was doing "defamation propaganda" against him and his senior, Colonel Anjum, in social media groups.

He also alleged that he allegedly used abusive language, which caused him significant distress and damage to his reputation.

The NCCIA said that the complainant had submitted screenshots of the alleged content.

It claimed that during the inquiry, the agency issued multiple notices to the accused, "directing him to appear before it to record his statement and clarify his position".

However, the agency claimed that Mr Shah did not appear before the NCCIA and "wilfully avoided participation in the enquiry proceedings, demonstrating a non-cooperative and evasive attitude".

Body of missing minor girl found at sea

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The body of a seven-year-old girl, who had been missing since Tuesday, was found floating in the sea on Wednesday, police and rescue officials said.

Docks SHO Nand Lal said the body of Aneesa Ali was found in seawater near a jungle area in Machhar Colony. She had gone missing on Tuesday evening while playing outside her home, which is located near the sea.

The officer shared that the girl was mentally challenged. Her relatives told the police that they did not want legal action. After completing the medico-legal formalities, the body was handed over to her parents, the SHO added.

Suspect killed in Korangi 'encounter'

A suspected robber was shot dead in an alleged encounter in the Korangi area on Wednesday, police said.

They added that a police patrol tried to stop two men riding a motorcycle near the Government Polytechnic Institute for checking. However, the suspects opened fire on the police. During the exchange of gunfire, one suspect was killed while the other escaped in wounded condition.

The dead suspect was identified as Junaid Rehman. Police recovered a 9mm pistol, bullets and two mobile phones from him.

SHC dismisses petition seeking ban on release of animated biblical film

Bench describes plea against *David* as 'misconceived'

By Sumair Abdullah

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Wednesday dismissed a petition seeking the imposition of a ban on animated biblical musical film *David* (2025) for allegedly hurting religious sentiments of Muslims.

The petition was filed by a citizen, Abdul Razzaq, against respondents, including the federal government, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra), film censor board and others.

It was taken up by a two-judge bench comprising Justice Adnan-ul-Karim Memon and Justice Yousuf Ali Sayeed, which dismissed the plea at the preliminary hearing stage, observing that it was "misconceived".

In its order, the court noted that the petitioner sought direction against the impending release of an animated motion picture film titled *David*, said to be based on "the life of the Prophet of that name, as recognised by the respective texts held sacred by followers of the three main monotheistic faiths, with it being alleged on the basis of its theatrical trailer that the portrayal of his life is inconsistent with Islamic teachings, hence would deeply hurt the religious sentiments of Muslims, and the imposition of a ban being sought accordingly".

Referring to an identical petition filed in 2022 against the motion picture *Joyland*, in which the petitioner had sought a ban on the grounds that it was "portraying a relationship between a married man and a transgender woman", the SHC noted that the plea had already been dismissed by the SHC and it reproduced the observations of that division bench in the order sheet.

The two-member bench had observed in its detailed order issued in 2022: "[…] in our view, where a cinematic work has passed through the censors, who have examined its content and cleared it for release with an appropriate certification, an individual cannot be allowed to trump that decision through a court proceeding based on his conception of morality. Indeed, it is not the function of the court under Article 199 to make a moral judgment so as to curtail the freedom of speech and expression of a filmmaker, as safeguarded under Article 19 of the Constitution.

"On the contrary, the default position of the court under Article 199 ought to be that of fully safeguarding the fundamental rights by giving as expansive an interpretation to Article 19 as possible, and in the event of a restriction being imposed by the Board or any other authority that may be competent in that regard, testing the reasonableness of that restriction stringently, so as to ensure that the same is 'reasonable' in the strictest conceivable sense.

"As such, in the absence of any restriction imposed by the concerned quarter, whether that be the Board or Provincial Government, it does not fall to the court to morally police the public by making a determination of what should or should not be viewed and to take on the function of itself devising and imposing a restriction. Suffice it to say that unnecessary censorship suffocates a society and stifles its creativity and growth."

The court added: "Looking to the matter at hand, we are confident that Islam, being the great global religion that it is, is strong enough to withstand a cinematic work portraying a purely fictional account of a relationship humanising a transgender character, and are equally sanguine that our society is not so weak as to crumble as a consequence."

Mayor throws his weight behind culling amid surge in dog-bite cases

• Questions whether critics comprehend the suffering caused by dog attacks • Says a small group should not dictate stray dog policy, which must reflect majority's will

By Imran Ayub

KARACHI: Amid a surge in dog-bite cases across Karachi, Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Wednesday signalled that the situation was approaching a tipping point and openly suggested culling as a possible option if the people demanded immediate relief.

Responding to questions during an interaction with the media in Ittehad Town, the mayor said public opinion on the issue varied sharply across neighbourhoods, but warned against allowing a small group to dictate policy for a city of over 25 million people.

"If I ask people here in Ittehad Colony what should be done about stray dogs, they will say that the dogs should be killed. But if I go to Clifton, there are 10 to 15 people who say, 'No, this should not happen.' Those 10 to 15 people impose their way of thinking on 25 million people," he said.

Emphasising the democratic will, Mr Wahab said he believes that "the will of all the people must be considered," adding, "a handful of individuals cannot be given supremacy over everyone else."

Highlighting the limitations of neutering, he said the method requires time to show results and questioned the criticism faced by authorities when attacks continue during that period.

"If neutering is to be done, its impact will take time to appear. Then people should not criticise when dogs bite," he said. "If the city wants quick results, then culling will have to be carried out.

"We are prepared for both options. Hundreds of people have been bitten in just a few days. I appeal to critics to listen to victims and their families before objecting to decisive measures."

Mayor Wahab also pointed to legal hurdles, saying that a small group repeatedly approaches courts to block action and then cited an example from India. "This issue also came up in the Indian Supreme Court, and it resolved it. The court said that instead of neutering, culling should be done," he said.

MAYOR Murtaza Wahab speaks at the event.—Dawn

He questioned whether those opposing culling truly understand the suffering caused by dog attacks. "Ask those people who have actually gone through this experience what they want — culling or neutering?," he said.

Uplift work initiated in West, Keamari districts

Earlier, the mayor laid the foundation stones for two major infrastructure development projects in district West and district Keamari, aimed at improving road connectivity, drainage and overall civic facilities in the city.

In district West, he inaugurated a mega infrastructure project for the rehabilitation of Hub River Road to Tori Bangash Road in Ittehad Town.

The project, with an estimated cost of Rs8 billion, is one of the largest road development initiatives in the area.

Speaking at the ceremony, attended by city council members, elected representatives and a large number of locals, the mayor said the project reflects the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's (KMC) commitment to inclusive and sustainable urban development.

Under the project, Hub River Road will be converted into a 12,500-foot-long dual carriageway, a move expected to significantly ease traffic congestion in District West.

A modern drainage system spanning 8,000 feet has been incorporated into the design, along with the installation of more than 21,000 feet of RCC drainage pipelines to improve stormwater management.

The completion of the project will eliminate flooding issues in the area, he added.

Separately, the mayor also laid the foundation stone for the reconstruction of Sparco Road in District Keamari.

The project is being executed at a cost of approximately Rs56m and is described as an important milestone in the city's urban development efforts.

The scheme includes 48,000 square feet of paver blocks and 65,000 square feet of asphalt wearing course, along with a modern sewerage system and a high-quality road structure.